

Maryland DNR Forest Service

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Annapolis State Maryland 21401

SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management

Surveillance Audit



NSF International

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NSF International Forestry Program Audit Report

A. Certificate Holder

Maryland DNR Forest Service

NSF Customer Number

OY301

Contact Information (Name, Title, Phone & Email)

Jack Perdue
Forest Resource Planning
Maryland Forest Service
Department of Natural Resources
580 Taylor Ave., E-1
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
[410-260-8505](tel:410-260-8505) (office)
jack.perdue@maryland.gov

B. Scope of Certification

The forest management program of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on the following Maryland State Forests: Chesapeake Forest Lands, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and the Savage River State Forest. The SFI Certificate Number is NSF-SFI-FS-OY301.

Locations Included in the Certification

Chesapeake Forest Lands
Pocomoke State Forest
Green Ridge State Forest
Garrett State Forest
Potomac State Forest
Savage River State Forest

C. Audit Team

Mike Ferrucci, NSF Lead Auditor

Audit Date(s) (If multiple locations were audited, indicate the date of each site visit)

April 24–26, 2018

D. Significant Changes to Operations or to the Standard

None

E. Audit Results

- ☐ No nonconformities or opportunities for improvement were identified.
- ☒ There were 3 opportunities for improvement identified. Summary:
Management plans could be improved regarding accurately describing the status (ongoing vs. completed) of selected activities; Use of the trademark symbol (™) is recommended in all documents when first using the initials SFI; and there are opportunities to improve the awareness of predicted climate change patterns and the impacts to wildlife and biodiversity.

Issues identified at previous audits reviewed for continued conformance. Summary:

1. In the FY2017 Annual Work Plans (AWP) for western State Forests the Ecologically Significant Area (ESA) Plans had not been completed. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 1.1.1 i). The program has addressed issues related to the portions of management plans covering Environmentally Sensitive Areas.
2. On the Maryland DNR Forest Service website, the words “Sustainable Forestry Initiative” did not include the registered trademark - ®. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 5 Part 4, Indicator 4.2). Trademark Use on the program’s web-site is now in conformance.

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A (not using)

All logos and/or labels, including ANSI, ANAB, SFI, PEFC, ATFS, etc., are utilized correctly in accordance with NSF SOP 14680 and SOP 4876. If answering “No”, a finding of nonconformity should be issued.

Answer: There are no labels used, and logo use is following requirements except as noted above.

F. Appendices

Appendix 1:	Audit Notification Letter and Audit Agenda
Appendix 2:	SFI Forest Management Public Summary Report
Appendix 3:	Audit Standard Checklist - SFI Forest Management Standard
Appendix 4:	Site Visit Notes
Appendix 5:	Meeting Attendance
Appendix 6:	Multi-site Checklist

Appendix 1**Audit Notification Letter and Audit Agenda**

April 10, 2018

Re: Confirmation of SFI® Surveillance Audit, Maryland Forest Service

Jack Perdue, Maryland DNR Forest Service
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Perdue

We are scheduled to conduct the 2018 FSC® and SFI® Surveillance Audits of Maryland's state forest system the week of April 23. This letter provides the SFI audit plan; the FSC audit plan has been provided by Beth Jacqumain, SCS Lead Auditor.

The 2018 SFI Audit is a partial review of your SFI Program to confirm that it continues to be in conformance with the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard and that continual improvement is being made. It also includes an assessment of your program against the new.

The scope statement (appearing on your certificate) is as follows:

The forest management program of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on the following Maryland State Forests: Chesapeake Forest Lands, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and the Savage River State Forest. The SFI Certificate Number is NSF-SFI-FS-0Y301.

The audits will commence with an opening meeting on April 24 at 8 am at the New Germany State Park. The closing meeting will occur on Thursday April 26, 2015 from 2:30 to 3:30 pm at the Green Ridge S.F. office. The proposed schedule is outlined below:

April 24- Tuesday: Potomac-Garret State Forest

(~10 minute drive from hotel to New Germany State Park; 40 minutes to PGSF)

- 7 am: (optional) breakfast at the auditor's hotel in location;
- 8-10:30 am, New Germany State Park: Opening Meeting: Review 2017 CARs, program changes, audit plan; Review of central office programs/administration; Presentations
- 11:30 am to 5 pm, Potomac-Garret State Forest: field visits; 5 pm daily briefing;
- Optional dinner at 6:30 pm.

April 25 - Wednesday: Savage River State Forest

(~short drive from hotel to state forest office)

- 8:30 am to 4 pm Savage River State Forest office and field audits;
- 4:30 pm daily briefing
- Optional dinner at 6:30 pm.

April 26 - Thursday: Green Ridge State Forest

(~45 minute drive from hotel to state forest office)

- 7 am: (auditors and Maryland staff who are staying at hotel) breakfast meeting to consider issues and adjust schedule if needed
- 8:30 am to 1:30 pm Green Ridge State Forest office and field audits
- 1:30-2:30 pm Auditors prepare for closing meeting (location Green Ridge S.F. office)
- 2:30 pm Closing Meetings (Green Ridge office)
- 2 hour travel time from closing meeting location to BWI Airport
- Mike Ferrucci: 7:50 pm flight; Beth Jacqmain: hotel; morning flight

The above tentative schedule outlines the broad flow of the audit process during this visit. The schedule can be adapted either in advance or on-site to accommodate any special circumstances. Your managers should prepare more-detailed daily itineraries that allow for up to one hour of background information and discussion in the appropriate office regarding each forest assessed. As during the previous audits please arrange field lunches to expedite the process.

The field visits will be conducted by a joint field team: Beth Jacqmain will audit with an FSC-focus (but she will assess some elements of the SFI Standard); I will audit with an SFI-focus (but some elements of FSC will be included in my work). Bios for each of the audit team members are provided as attachments.

During the SFI part of the audit I will:

1. Review progress on achieving SFI objectives and performance measures and the results of the management review of your SFI Program;
2. Review selected components of your SFI program, with a focus on the following requirements (as well as any requirement pertaining to field sites that are selected for review):
 - Objective 1: Forest Management Planning
 - Objectives 2, 3, 5, and 7: Health, Productivity, Water Resources, Visual, Utilization (mostly field-oriented)
 - Objective 10: Forestry Research, Science & Technology
 - Performance Measure 11.2 (support for logger training); and
 - Objective 14: Communications and Public Reporting;
 - Objective 15: Management Review & Continual Improvement;

Please assemble office evidence needed to confirm conformance to these requirements.

3. Verify continued effective implementation of corrective action plans from recent previous NSF audits;
4. Review logo and/or label use;
5. Confirm public availability of summary reports;
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of planned activities aimed at continual improvement of your SFI Program; and
7. Evaluate the multi-site requirements.

Multi-Site Sampling Plan:

Your responsibilities for Public Lands Stewardship include the role of “central administration” for this multi-site program. I plan on reviewing the SFI multi-site requirements following the opening meeting on the first day of the audit.

The following sites are included in the overall scope: Chesapeake Forest Lands, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and the Savage River State Forest. The 2018 audit will include 4 of these 6, all in western Maryland, as follows: Green Ridge State Forest, Potomac State Forest, Garrett State Forest, and the Savage River State Forest. These forests were selected to include a broad cross-section of activities and of the sites and to facilitate travel. Random sampling was not employed in the selection of these 4 forests but will be used in the selection of sites to be visited.

Field Site Selections

Please provide a list of management activities for the forests being audited this year. The lists should be as comprehensive as possible, covering recently completed, ongoing, and planned harvests at a minimum. Please also include lists of other management activities (road building, site-preparation, planting, TSI or release for example) in cases where compiling such lists will not be unduly time-consuming. The two lead auditors will make preliminary random selections from these lists. We will then ask your forest managers to prepare suggested daily itineraries which include our primary selections supplemented by sites which are proximate or which combine into efficient travel routes.

We will need to complete the preliminary selections at least one week before the start of the audits to allow your managers time to prepare their daily itineraries.

I look forward to visiting you and evaluating continual improvement in your SFI Program. If you have any questions regarding this planned audit, please contact me.

Best Regards,



Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor, NSF

203-887-9248 mferrucci@iforest.com

Attachments:

Audit Visit Record

Mike Ferrucci's short bio

Beth Jacqmain's short bio

Audit Visit Record

Registration / Reassessment	Surveillance 1	Surveillance 2	Surveillance 3	Surveillance 4
Date(s)	Dates	Dates	Dates	Dates
April 7-11, 2014	April 7-9, 2015	April 26-28, 2016	April 24-27, 2017	April 24-26, 2018
Sites visited	Sites visited	Sites visited	Sites visited	Sites visited
	Chesapeake Forest Lands, Garrett State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest	Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Savage River	Chesapeake State Forest, Pocomoke State Forest	Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Savage River SF

Mike Ferrucci, SFI and FSC Forestry and Chain of Custody Lead Auditor/Consultant

Mike Ferrucci is qualified as a RAB-QSA Lead Auditor (ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems), as an SFI Lead Auditor for Forest Management, Procurement, and Chain of Custody, as an FSC Lead Auditor Forest Management and Chain of Custody, as a Tree Farm Group Certification Lead Auditor, and as a GHG Lead Auditor. Mike has led Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) certification and precertification reviews throughout the United States. He has also led or participated in joint SFI and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification projects in nearly one dozen states and a joint scoping or precertification gap-analysis project on tribal lands throughout the United States. He also co-led the pioneering pilot dual evaluation of the Lakeview Stewardship Unit on the Fremont-Winema National Forest.

For 12 years Mike was the SFI Program Manager for NSF – International Strategic Registrations responsible for all aspects of the firm’s SFI Certification programs. In that role Mike developed and managed one of the largest forest and chain of custody certification programs in the U.S.

Mike has conducted Chain of Custody audits for all segments of the forest products industry, including printers, corrugated and box producers, integrated paper companies, paper distributors, solid wood mills, engineered wood products facilities, brokers, and distributors. In audits with pulp mills, corrugated producers, and box plants Mike has addressed the issues involving recycled content. Mike has also conducted or participated in assessments of forest management operations throughout the United States, with field experience in 4 countries and 33 states.

Mike Ferrucci has 37 years of forest management experience. His expertise is in sustainable forest management planning; in certification of forests as sustainably managed; in the application of easements for large-scale working forests, and in the ecology, silviculture, and management of mixed species forests, with an emphasis on regeneration and management of native hardwood species. Mike has conducted or participated in assessments of forest management operations throughout the United States, with field experience in 4 countries and 34 states. Mike has been a member of the Society of American Foresters for over forty years. He is Past Chair of the SFI Auditor’s Forum. Mike is also a Lecturer at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where he has taught graduate courses and workshops in forest management, harvesting operations, professional forest ethics, private forestry, and financial analysis.

Beth Jacqmain, FSC Lead Auditor

Beth Jacqmain is a Certification Forester with SCS Global Services. MS Forest Biology/Ecology from Auburn University, Alabama and BS Forest Management from Michigan State University. Beth has 20+ years’ experience in the forestry field including public land management, private consulting, and private corporate. Qualified ANSI RAB accredited ISO 14001 EMS Lead Auditor and a qualified FSC Lead Auditor for Forest Management/Chain of Custody. Audited and led FSC certification and precertification evaluations, harvest and logging operations certification evaluations, and has participated in joint PEFC and American Tree Farm certifications. A 9 year member of the Forest Guild, 20 year adjunct-Faculty with Itasca Community College, Natural Resources Department. Jacqmain’s experience is in forest management and ecology; ecosystem silviculture; the use of silviculture towards meeting strategic and tactical goals; tree regeneration; forest timber quality improvement, conifer thinning operations, pine restoration, and fire ecology in conifer dominated systems. Beth has experience in forest ecology and management in the Midwest, Pacific Northwest, and the Southeastern US.

Appendix 2

Maryland DNR Forest Service 2018 SFI® Forest Management Summary Report

Introduction

The SFI Program of the Maryland DNR Forest Service of Annapolis, Maryland has achieved continuing conformance with the SFI® 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard, including the sustainable harvest level requirement (Performance Measure 1.1), according to the NSF SFI-FS Certification Audit Process.

The Maryland DNR Forest Service initially obtained SFI Certification from NSF on July 24, 2003 and the program was re-certified in July 2006. Initially only the Chesapeake Forest Lands were certified, with the Pocomoke State Forest added in 2009 as part of an expansion of scope that included other recently acquired lands. In 2011 the organization sought and was granted recertification to the current scope based on an audit of the six largest state forests against the SFI 2010-2014 Standard. The state forests included in the current scope were re-certified to the SFI 2015-2019 Standards in April of 2014. The most recent audit was a surveillance audit in April 2018.

Maryland DNR Forest Service has an extensive program for harvest planning and approval. A Sustainable Forest Management Plan has been developed for each forest, and these plans are regularly updated. Harvests levels have been modeled by forest type for sustainability by area control for a 50-year planning horizon. Based on the Sustainable Forest Management Plan an Annual Work Plan is developed for each forest including planned harvests and other management activities. The Annual Work Plan is reviewed by various agencies in the Maryland DNR, and a Citizen's Advisory Team. It is also posted on the Maryland DNR Forest Service website for public comment for a period of 30 days. Following review of comments the finalized plan is approved and posted on the Maryland DNR Forest Service website.

This report describes the results of the 2018 Surveillance Audit which considered changes in operations, the management review system, and efforts at continuous improvement. A subset of the SFI requirements were selected for detailed review.

Maryland's State Forests

Maryland DNR Forest Service is responsible for the management of the 215,607 acres of Maryland State Forests through a variety of designations. The Forest Service is supported by other agencies within the Department of Natural Resources including Wildlife, Fisheries, Heritage, and the Natural Resources Police. Various management plans provide a useful summary of the importance of these forestlands and the broad policy goals:

Excerpted from the Savage River State Forest Management Plan:

'The resources and values provided from state forests reach people throughout the State and beyond. These resources and values range from economic to aesthetic and from scientific to inspirational. The Department of Natural Resources is mandated by law to consider a wide variety of issues and uses when pursuing a management strategy for these forests. The importance of considering these factors is acknowledged in the Annotated Code, which establishes the following policy pertaining to state forests and parks:

"Forests, streams, valleys, wetlands, parks, scenic, historic and recreation areas of the state are basic assets. Their proper use, development, and preservation are necessary to protect and promote the health, safety, economy and general welfare of the people of the state. It is the policy of the state to encourage the economic development and the use of its natural resources for the improvement of the local economy, preservation of natural beauty, and promotion of the recreational and leisure interest throughout the state." (Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article §5-102)

The Department recognizes the many benefits provided by state forests and has established a corresponding management policy in regulation.

"The state forests are managed to promote the coordinated uses of their varied resources and values for the benefit of all people, for all time. Water, wildlife, wood, natural beauty and opportunities for natural environmental recreation, wildlands experience, research demonstration areas, and outdoor education are major forest benefits." (Code of Maryland Regulations 08.07.01.01)

The 2018 Surveillance Audit was performed by NSF on April 24-26, 2018 by an audit team headed by Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor. Beth Jacqmain was the FSC Lead Auditor and supported the lead auditor. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting audits contained in SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules, Section 9 - Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation.

The objective of the audit was to assess conformance of the firm's SFI Program to the requirements of the SFI 2015-2019 Standard and Rules, Section 2 – Forest Management.

The scope of the audit included forest management operations. Forest practices that were the focus of field inspections included those that have been under active management over the planning period of the past 2 years. In addition practices conducted earlier were also reviewed as appropriate (regeneration and BMP issues, for example); SFI obligations to promote sustainable forestry practices, to seek legal compliance, and to incorporate continual improvement systems were also within the scope of the audit.

The SFI Standard was used without modifying any requirements. SFI requirements that are outside of the scope of Maryland's SFI program were excluded from the scope of the SFI Certification Audit as follows:

- Indicator 10.1.2. Research on genetically engineered trees via forest tree biotechnology shall adhere to all applicable federal, state, and provincial regulations and international protocols ratified by the United States and/or Canada depending on jurisdiction of management. Maryland DNR Forest Service does not participate in research on genetically engineered trees.

Audit Process

NSF initiated the SFI audit process with a series of planning phone calls and emails to reconfirm the scope of the audit, review the SFI Indicators and evidence to be used to assess conformance, verify that Maryland DNR Forest Service was prepared to proceed to the SFI Audit, and to prepare a detailed audit plan.

The audit was governed by a detailed audit plan designed to enable the audit team to efficiently determine conformance with the applicable requirements. The plan provided for the assembly and review of audit evidence consisting of documents, interviews, and on-site inspections of ongoing or completed forest practices.

During the audit NSF reviewed a sample of the written documentation assembled to provide objective evidence of conformance. NSF also selected field sites for inspection based upon the risk of environmental impact, likelihood of occurrence, special features, and other criteria outlined in the NSF protocols. NSF selected and interviewed stakeholders such as contract loggers, landowners and other interested parties, and interviewed employees within the organization to confirm that the SFI Standard was understood and actively implemented. The activities of the central office were reviewed against the multi-site requirements as well.

The possible findings of the audit included conformance, major non-conformance, minor non-conformance, opportunities for improvement, and practices that exceeded the requirements of the standard.

A report was prepared and final approval was done by an independent Certification Board Member assigned by NSF. Follow-up or Surveillance Audits are required by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard[®]. The next Recertification Audit is scheduled for the first week of April, 2019.

Overview of Audit Findings

Maryland's SFI Program demonstrated conformance against the SFI 2015-2019 Standard. There were zero 2018 non-conformances, and three "Opportunities for Improvement". The program has continued to exceed the standard in several areas. As such, the program has earned continuing certification.

There were no new Non-Conformances in the 2018 audit.

Two Minor Non-Conformances identified in the 2017 audit have been resolved:

1. In the FY2017 Annual Work Plans (AWP) for western State Forests the Ecologically Significant Area (ESA) Plans had not been completed, but have since been. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules[®], Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 1.1.1 i)
2. On the Maryland DNR Forest Service website the words "Sustainable Forestry Initiative" now does include the registered trademark - [®]. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules[®], Section 5 Part 4, Indicator 4.2)

Progress in implementing these corrective action plans will be reviewed in subsequent surveillance audits.

Three opportunities for improvement (OFI) were identified in the 2018 audit:

1. There is an Opportunity for Improvement in the management plans to accurately describe the status (ongoing vs. completed) of all activities; some completed activities are described as planned or pending. SFI Indicator 1.1.1 requires "Forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation".
2. There is an Opportunity for Improvement in the use of the trademark symbol ([™]) in documents when first using the initials SFI. SFI Section 5 - Rules for Use of *SFI* On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks provides required and recommended practices for use of the SFI logo and other trademarked items.
3. There is an Opportunity for Improvement regarding the awareness of predicted climate change patterns and the impacts to wildlife and biodiversity. SFI Indicator 10.3.2 requires a "Program Participants are knowledgeable about climate change

impacts on wildlife, wildlife habitats and conservation of biological diversity through international, national, regional or local programs.”

These findings do not indicate a current deficiency, but served to alert Maryland DNR Forest Service to areas that could be strengthened or which could merit future attention.

NSF also identified the following areas where forestry practices and operations of Maryland DNR Forest Service exceed the basic requirements of the standard:

There were five areas where the forestry program of Maryland DNR’s Forest Service “Exceeds the Requirements”:

1. The program exceeds the requirements for promoting conservation of native biological diversity.
SFI Indicator 4.1.1 requires a “Program to incorporate the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats and ecological community types at stand and landscape levels.”
2. The program exceeds the requirements for retaining stand-level wildlife habitat elements.
SFI Indicator 4.1.2 requires the “Development of criteria and implementation of practices, as guided by regionally based best scientific information, to retain stand-level wildlife habitat elements such as snags, stumps, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees and nest trees.”
3. The program exceeds the requirements for the protection of threatened and endangered species.
SFI Indicator 4.2.1 requires a “Program to protect threatened and endangered species.”
4. The program exceeds the requirements for providing an exceptional range of high-quality recreational opportunities State Forests.
SFI Indicator 5.4.1 requires participants to “Provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.”
5. The MD DNR’s use of information and expert advice or stakeholder consultation in the identification special sites for protection exceeds the requirements for this indicator.
SFI Indicator 6.1.1 requires the “Use of information such as existing natural heritage data, expert advice or stakeholder consultation in identifying or selecting special sites for protection.”